

count, perhaps, of his contributions to the
Trench reviews
or of his "Philosophes classiques du XIX^e
Sikcle" he
occasionally found letters awaiting him at
Hachette's.

These were handed him by Zola, in whose
presence he
opened them. At times they were simply
abusive, at others
they warned him to be careful of his soul, and
in either case
they were anonymous. But Taine on receiving
any such
missive merely laughed and shrugged his
shoulders. "It
is of no account," he would say, " it only comes
from some
poor benighted country priest. I am
anathema to the
village cures."

Zola received no help or encouragement from
the authors
he met at Hachette's, but this is not
surprising; in the
first years, at all events, they knew nothing of
his literary
proclivities, and he was too timid to reveal
them. He had
now moved from the den in the Rue Soufflot to
an old house,
a former convent, in the Impasse St.
Dominique, near the
Rue Eoyer Collard, where he occupied a
monastic room,
overlooking a large garden. Thence he betook
himself to
the Rue Neuve de la Pdpinikre, between the
fortifications
and the Montparnasse cemetery, over which
the view from
his window extended. But his peregrinations
were incessant, and at the beginning of the winter of
1863 he moved

again, this time to 7, Rue des Feuillantines, a
turning out
of the Rue St. Jacques. Nearly all his spare
time was given
to writing. Thinking of the Bohemianism from
which he
had lately emerged, he began his novel "La
Confession de
Claude "; then put it by for a time, and devoted
himself to
short stories. His "Fée Amoureuse"¹ had
been printed
in an Aix newspaper, "La Provence"; and he
now (1863)

¹ See *ante*, p. 49.